

Exchange With Reporters at District of Columbia Metropolitan Police Department Headquarters

November 12, 2002

Department of Homeland Security Legislation

Q. —looking for a compromise homeland bill?

The President. I'm looking for a good homeland bill. That's what I want.

Q. Are you going to press for it today?

The President. Pardon me?

Q. Are you going to press people, lawmakers?

The President. I'm going to press people right now, in a very gentle way, and say let's get homeland security bill done, one that enables this country to be able to respond to threats, one that enables the President to be able to put the right people at the right place at the right time.

Iraqi Response to the U.N. Resolution

Q. Mr. President, the Iraqi Parliament, sir, has rejected the U.N. resolution.

The President. Let's see what Saddam—

Q. What happens if he follows through?

The President. Then if Saddam Hussein does not comply with the—to the detail of the resolution, we will lead a coalition to disarm him.

Q. Does that start—

The President. It's over. We're through negotiations. There's no more time. The man must disarm. He said he would disarm. He now must disarm. And you know, this kind of deception and delay—all that is over with. The country is committed to making the world more peaceful by disarming Saddam Hussein. It's just as simple as that. There's a zero-tolerance policy now. The last 11 years have been a period of time when this guy tried to deceive the world, and we're through with it. It's as simple as that.

Q. Friday is the first test.

The President. There's no test. This man must disarm. There must be a willingness in his administration to disarm.

Q. The Iraqi Parliament has recommended the other way.

The President. Well, the Iraqi Parliament is nothing but a rubber stamp for Saddam Hussein. There's no democracy. This guy is a dictator, so we'll have to see what he says.

DC Security Cameras

Q. Mr. President, these cameras have become controversial in this city—

The President. Well, then you can talk to the Mayor about that.

Turkey and Iraq

Q. Thank you. Any response to reports about Turkey selling antinerve antidotes to Iraq?

The President. No response right now.

NOTE: The exchange began at 10:33 a.m., following a tour of the Synchronized Operations Command Complex. In his remarks, the President referred to President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; and Mayor Anthony A. Williams of the District of Columbia. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Remarks Following a Visit to District of Columbia Metropolitan Police Department Headquarters

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Thanks a lot. I want you to note, the Mayor said I made him a senior adviser. [Laughter] Mr. Mayor, you're doing a great job for the city of Washington, DC. I'm honored that I'm living in your neighborhood. And as I told a lot of the folks who I had the honor of meeting just a while ago at the Emergency Operations Center, I feel safe living here. And so does my family. And so do a lot of families, thanks to the dedication and hard work of people on the frontline of making sure that this city is buttoned up, dealing with the threats we face. I'm here to thank you all for your hard work.

I'm here as well to tell all the first-responders across the District as well as around the country how much our country is grateful for your service, your dedication, and remind you that we have not only a duty to prepare for emergencies, we have a duty in this country to prevent them from happening in the first place.